



## **VDOT's 511 Virginia lets travelers know what lies ahead**

When embarking on a long trip or short commute, people now have the advantage of knowing what factors might affect their travels. Virginia's statewide traffic and travel information service, 511 Virginia, empowers people to make better travel decisions by providing real-time information about road construction, traffic incidents, weather conditions and more.

To access this and other travel-related information, travelers can simply dial 511 from any landline or mobile telephone. The telephone system is voice activated and easy to use. Callers simply speak the menu items they are interested in to receive information. However, it is recommended that drivers pull off the road before calling.

In addition, travelers can visit the 511 Virginia Web site at [www.511virginia.org](http://www.511virginia.org) to gather information prior to their trips. This site contains even more information than the telephone system, giving users access to 400 Web cams, information about more than 26,000 points of interest, driving directions with an interactive map that displays possible delays along travel routes, information about events throughout the state and much more.

The service, managed by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), is available 24 hours a day and currently offers information for 98 roads in Virginia, including every mile of Virginia's interstates. Upon learning of an incident, VDOT and Virginia State Police officials provide up-to-date information to 511 Virginia to alert travelers. However, because VDOT and the Virginia State Police are not always the first to detect traffic incidents or other unplanned events, VDOT is actively working to improve communications with local law enforcement officials. This effort will help to

expand 511 Virginia's information content and put more information where it is needed - in the hands of the traveling public.

Virginia launched its statewide 511 system in February 2005 and since then has received more than 1 million calls. Prior to 2005, the 511 Virginia service was available along the I-81 corridor and was previously called *Travel Shenandoah*. Virginia is one of 24 states to offer a 511 service; by 2010, 511 service is expected to be available across the country. To learn more about 511 Virginia, visit [www.511Virginia.org](http://www.511Virginia.org).